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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

SUBJECT Conditions In The Marbas Coal Basin

PLACE ACQUIRED
(BY SOURCE)

25X1A

DATE ACQUIRED
(BY SOURCE)

DATE (OF INFO.)

DATE DISTR. 14 May 54

NO. OF PAGES 3

NO. OF ENCLS.

SUPP. TO
REPORT NO.

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1. The Maritsa Coal [Marbas] Basin is located near the Maritsa River at Dimitrovgrad, Khaskovo Okoliya. The following enterprises are the chief consumers of the coal from this basin:
 - a) "Stalin" Chemical Plant in Dimitrovgrad
 - b) "Vulko Chervenkov" Steam Heat and Electric Power Plant
 - c) Asbestos and Cement Plant in Dimitrovgrad
 - d) "Vulkan" Cement Plant
 - e) "Maritsa" Steam Heat and Electric Power Plant
 - f) Railroads in this area of Bulgaria
2. Atanas Naydenov, a Communist, director of the "Marbas" Coal Basin.
3. Principal mines of the coal basin:
 - a) "Maritsa" Mine, under the supervision of Sgurov and Buchvarov
 - b) "Merichleri" Mine, the brigadiers of which are Zhekov and Radev
 - c) "Nadezhda" Mine
 - d) "Novi rudnitsi" mine. No [new ?] galleries have been made here. Those that exist here are not well made and therefore many accidents occur, which are sometimes fatal. Some galleries have thin coal layers and in some the coal has been exploited.
4. Each mine has a Party organization whose leader is a Party secretary. The State Security informers who are most trusted by the Party are:

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2

- a) Nikola Lamberov, secretary of the "Merichleri" Mine
- b) Stoyan Zhelev, secretary of the "Nadezhda" Mine
- c) Kolyu Dimitrov, secretary at the "Novi rudnitsi" Mine

The Party secretaries hold continuous consultations. None of these secretaries works in the mine, but is assigned to one of the labor brigades and receives regular daily wages plus extra pay and benefits for attending Party meetings.

5. All mine workers are not members of the Party and even those who are members are not satisfied with the regime of Communist dictatorship. For example, Aleksandur Rangelov, "Hero of Socialistic Labor" from the Georgi Dimitrov Mine in Dimitrovo, and his crew were sent temporarily to the Marbas Coal Basin to orient several crews in his method of working and thus create cadres which would engage more workers in the production of coal because the plan for the first six months of 1953 was fulfilled by only 50 percent. However, the local leaders in the Marbas Coal Basin, especially in the Maritsa Mine, did not want to teach the local crews to follow this method because the workers were resisting and sabotaging the production of coal.
6. All the large industrial cities such as Sofia, Dimitrovo, Kazanluk, and Stalin have schools for labor reserves. Young people who intend to become specialists in the mines attend these schools. About 100 young people who were trained as specialists were sent to the coal basin. When they arrived at the mines they were assigned to ordinary mining work, and therefore about one half of these trained specialists left their work. About 3,700 new workers entered the mines during the first six months of 1953, while about 3,800 workers left their work and went to other work projects or were unemployed. This indicates that the work conditions in the mines are very poor. Labor agitates actively against Communist exploitation even though this is very dangerous.
7. The output of coal has decreased considerably because the workers resist and refuse to be treated like slaves. Also the production of coal is not mechanized in the galleries or at the open faces. Practically no Soviet machines are received at the mines and only manpower is used.
8. The "Vuglishta" Association, directed by Yosif Levi, is in charge of mine discipline, however, the results achieved by the association are unsatisfactory. Many workers are sent to camps for slave labor where conditions and terror are worse than in the galleries.
9. The [Marbas ?] mine has a DOSO organization which is divided into sections and performs only militia duties. DOSO members are armed with pistols and automatic weapons. All DOSO members receive free summer vacations in the summer rest homes and on the beach in Stalin where military and police training is held. DOSO members, the favored children of the Party, have a special kitchen and a supply store located in the "Vasil Kolarov" kvartal (ward). Workers are not paid while on a two-week summer vacation. Shelyu Dinev, nicknamed Kasabat, a Communist, 32 years of age, cruel, and fanatical, is the DOSO secretary [of the mine].
10. Family workers prepare their meals at home and receive their food supplies from the Narmag (People's store). This area grows many vegetables. Because most of the vegetables are exported, the workers must stand in long lines to buy tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers. The workers' messhalls never serve any salad or fruit. There is a store for exemplary DOSO members, but the stores for the workers are depleted of stocks. There are two restaurants for unmarried workers which prepare only thick water [soup] and mouldy bread. All the mines have open air shops which sell a poor grade of cigars, sugarless biscuits, and waffles which are ridiculed by the workers.

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3

11. The workers are paid according to the amount of coal mined, which is based on workdays and norms. A worker works continuously for eight hours with a 15 minute break for lunch, which is brought to him in the gallery, then he works two to three hours cleaning up the gallery or making safeguards against cave-ins, moisture, or water, and finally two hours in the open at a receiving point or in transporting coal. He is paid from 16 to 19 leva per day for this work.
12. The worker with three or four dependents can buy about one kg of beans and three kg of ordinary bread for this daily wage. Other necessities are met by not spending money for food, walking barefoot, not buying any clothes, and suffering many sicknesses. When anyone leaves the mine, it is because of hard work, persecution by the State Security agents, and low wages. Only some of the Communists receive large salaries in the mines.
13. The workers glance through the newspapers without reading them. Many of the workers who have radios listen to all foreign broadcasts from Western Europe and North America. The Communists also listen to these broadcasts.
14. The Communist position in Bulgaria today is considered as temporary and very unstable.
15. Workers' wives up to 40 years of age must become members of the women's section of the Party and must attend Russian language courses every evening or else attend a first aid training course which consists of the following:
 - a) Air raid defense training
 - b) Training in defense against chemical warfare
 - c) Treatment of serious wounds caused by blunt objects
 - d) Treatment of wounds caused by firearms
 - e) Treatment of wounds caused by fire
16. The women also participate in resistance movements of the workers against dictatorship and against the plundering of workers.

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114.52	20M
114.72	20M
161	20M

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